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## WHERE BRAHMAN AND BUDDHIST MEET—A REVIEW.

IN an able article contributed to the November number of the *Theosophical Review* entitled "Where Brâhman and Buddhist Meet" Mr. I. C. Chattopadhyâya very clearly shows us that the attitude of hostility, maintained by the Brâhman and Buddhists towards each other, is held by the surface followers of the respective creeds and is based entirely on ignorance. He says: "The superficial Brâhman has looked upon the Buddha as an opponent of his faith, while the surface follower of the great Master has looked upon the Brâhman as an unworthy person far beyond the pale of his Dhamma of the Ariyas. This has specially been the case with Buddhists of the south and the Brâhman of modern India."

He then goes on to explain that the southern Buddhists take their stand on the *Pâli Pitakas*, as the only authoritative and original teachings of the Master, and read into the text of these collections, ideas which are entirely opposed to Brâhmanical thought; whilst the Brâhman being totally ignorant of the Pâli language and literature, take these later glosses as the teachings of the Blessed Lord, and thus consider Him an enemy of the religion of the Vedas. Such a view is not only absurdly incongruous, but also indicative of utter thoughtlessness, for these very Brâhman at the same time regard Buddha as an incarnation of their supreme deity Vishnu. A study of the Pâli scriptures themselves shows that the Buddha "so far from being an enemy of the Sanâtana Dharma, was on the contrary a great friend of this ancient and eternal Wisdom and Law, for it was He who at that time saved that Wisdom from corruption and degradation. All His censure was directed against the misunderstanding and misapplication of the ancient Law and never

against the Law itself. The truth of this statement is so patent even to a tyro in the Pâli Scholarship that I need hardly support it by the many quotations which could be made from almost every page of the Pitakas.

The Blessed One almost always speaks of the *Shramana* and *Brâhmana* as one, and directs both of them to the same goal. He traces out the steps that will lead the aspirant to the stage where he will be a Shramana and also a Brâhmana at the same time."

Although these steps are to be found scattered throughout the Pitakas yet the author considers that the clearest and most concise form in which they are presented is to be found in the *Mahâ-Assapura Sutta* of the Majjhima Nikâya, a Sutta which has not hitherto been translated into English. From this Sutta Mr. Chattopadhyâya now gives us extracts as proving in a pre-eminent degree that the Buddhistic and Brâhmanical disciplines were the same, and that they were and are meant to lead to the same end.

In giving extracts in this review, of the translations now before us we have a double object in view ; not only do they prove very clearly the authors point, but they also put us in possession of a marvellously clear and beautiful statement of the steps which we as would be theosophists must tread if we are to plant our fit upon the Path. The road along which we have to travel has of late been repeatedly indicated for us in our current literature with unmistakable clearness, and no one can be at a loss, to day, as to what he has to do. It is a road which knows of no short cuts for it is a straight line, and a straight line according to Euclid, is the shortest distance between two points.

In the first place the Buddha impresses his Bhikshus with the responsibility resting on them as bearing the name *Shramana*—a term literally meaning Energisers, or those who are energetic, earnest, and diligent in self-culture ; the same in meaning as Tâpasas. He says : "O Bhikshus ! people speak of you as Shramanas and ye also so call yourselves. Ye ought then to learn those laws and virtues that must be practised by Shramana and Brâhmana, so that ye may be really what ye are called, and thus a blessing to them who feed you and clothe you, and bring you offerings, that thus they may gain great benefit from such deeds of theirs. In this way alone will your withdrawal from the world bear fruit."

This beautiful ideal is one which we as theosophists would do well to keep always before us, the ideal namely of the

Shramana-Theosophist one who repays by the holiness of his life, the obligations placed upon him in receiving benefits, whether physical or spiritual from others, and so blessing the giver.

Then the Teacher takes us from the very first step to the last, naming all the qualifications one after another—adding at the end of each clause with great emphasis that none of their virtues alone must be considered as sufficient.

“The Bhikshu is directed to cultivate first of all :

(1) That modesty and delicacy of feeling and self-respect which makes one refrain from, and be ashamed of, all sinning—the possession of which virtue renders it almost impossible for one to lean towards evil on account of the very innate tendencies of one’s own nature.”

Before passing to the next qualification let us see what this—the first, the earliest qualification the Shramana is called upon to acquire—really means. We have struck here the very bed-rock on which the spiritual temple is to stand. The ordinary man regards the moral law as a *prohibition* the violation of which is attended with evil consequence—the Dharma of the eye is his guide. But the Shramana differs from the ordinary man in this respect that the prohibition is replaced by the idea of *intrinsic* virtue—an innate and natural leaning towards virtue because he loves the light—the Dharma of the heart is his guide. Thus the old dispensation in which the threatening “thou shalt not,” which thundered from the burning mount, is transformed into the invitation to become perfect “that ye may be the children of my Father,” as given by the Christ. This it seems to us is the idea contained in the first qualification. But even though the Shramana’s spirit is willing his flesh is weak, the body or instrument in which he has imprisoned himself for this incarnation does not naturally go as he would have it ; how then is he to bring it into harmony with himself, his real self? The seven rules, following the one already given, are laid down with a view to facilitate this process, showing him how to tune, as it were, the instrument to the player. “The Bhikshu must acquire :

(2) That purity of *behaviour* thorough and clear, which makes one free from self-exaltation, pride and aggressiveness towards others.

He must also practise.

(3) Purity of *speech* thorough and complete and not partial, so as neither to be self-assertive nor aggressive to others.

Next the aspirant should watch and cultivate :

(4) Purity of *mind* and mental behaviour going to the very root and bottom of the matter, so as to avoid self-assertion self-exaltation and aggressiveness in thought.

(5) Only that mode of living and livelihood which is pure and noble through and through, and which does not make one selfish and annoying and aggressive to others.

(6) Control over every *sense* organ of his body and mind.

Thus when he sees colour and form with his eyes, or hears sounds with his ears, he must not be attached to them so as to be carried away by them and lose the calm and balance of his mind. Nor must he be swayed by the countless thought currents and mental object which constantly sweep through the mental world, and are far subtler to detect than those which come through the physical senses. In this way keeping constant watch over his body and mind in their several functions the student must make them what they ought to be—namely, the instruments which the man is to use according to his will, and not fetters and snares which bind him hand and foot.

(7) Regulation of and moderation in everything which he enjoys in and appropriates from his surroundings by way of *food* and the rest.

Nor must he allow his body and mind to be idle and lazy ; he must cultivate.

(8) The virtue of constant *wakefulness* and alertness. He must be watchful, earnest and thoughtful, overcoming all that makes him dull, and darkens and veils his bright divine nature (*âvaraniya dhammâ* or *tamas*). Further to attain this end he should keep awake and mentally busied, and never fall asleep during the day, and even in sleep (middle watch ) he should not be thoughtless or careless. In the first place he should lie down on the right side, as a lion lies (*Sîhaseyya*) placing one foot over the other, a position which facilitates the working of the consciousness when the body is in sleep.

He should further make definite thoughts and resolutions in his mind so that he may not act carelessly during the sleep of the body.

He should also think definitely about his getting up in time. Thus let him spend the middle watch of the night careful even in sleep. He should wake up early in the morning and should spend the last watch in such actions and thoughts as will enable him to overcome the dulness of nature.

These then are the rules of conduct by which a Shramana is to prepare himself to enter on the path ; “but one more rule has got to be added one which is as it were the key note of all, for it underlies each single one of all the multitudinous act of a man so as to make them musical (harmonious)” this virtue is.

*The habit of constant reflection in everything he does* (Sati—Sampajañña).

Thus he should never be rash or careless in anything. He should pause and think before he takes a step, so that he may take it calmly and quietly and with purpose. He should reflect and trace the Kârmic sequence even when he walks or sits down, when he opens his eyes or closes them.

When all these are cultivated by the aspirant and when in him also the crowning virtue of constant reflection is found he has qualified himself to begin to tread the real Path that leads to true saintship. These only prepare him to turn from the outward activity to seek the true within the heart. Until these are cultivated at least to a very large extent, if not to perfection no one should leave the world for the life of solitude and renunciation (Sannyâsa). For such a step prematurely taken is productive only of evil since it retards the evolution of the man instead of hastening it. Therefore it is that the great teachers of the ancient Law (Sanâtana Dharma) will never allow any one to be a Sannyâsin before he is ready—though unfortunately in modern India lack of discrimination in this matter has produced countless numbers of those who though erroneously called Sannyâsins are in reality no better than vagabonds. Thus we find that the Buddha also—who is ignorantly supposed to have broken down the barriers of discipline (âshrama rules) and admitted any one and every one at once into the final stage (Sannyâsa)—did not fail most rigidly to enjoin his discipline. He knew the law, and was in no way opposed to the real spirit of Âshrama Dharma. Therefore He first lays down these rules for preliminary preparation, and only when by their observation the student becomes qualified does He invite him to take the further step (the first step upon the Path proper)—*viz.* :

10 Retirement from the world and living in solitude. Then follows the process of purging from the four obstacles, and the revelation of Truth in the four contemplations which finally leads him to a knowledge of the great fourfold Truth : (i) misery ; (ii) its cause ; (iii) its cessation (the bliss ineffable of Nirvâna); and (iv) the path that leads to it. He knows the cause and goal of the universe. Thus he is made free by

knowledge of the truth with all blemishes washed away and all fetters broken and removed.

Then and only then can he say "I am free." He knows that birth no longer can compel him ; Brahmacharya accomplished, all duties done, no longer is he for this earth.

"Such a man O Bhikshus ! is called a Shramana, a Brâhmana a Snâtaka who has bathed in the sacred stream of Divine Wisdom and has washed away all the impurities that once soiled his being. He also is the Veda knower, true Shrotriya he, well-versed in Shruti, celestial song of truth. He it is who is the true object of veneration, the worshipful Arya, the worthiest of all, great Arhan he."

"Can any unprejudiced mind, after reading these traditional words of the Buddha maintain that the Tathâgato was an enemy of the ancient Law of the Âryans, an opponent of the Vedas, and a foe to the Brâhman?"

So much then for the quotations from Mr. Châttophyâyas article and we may summerize the preliminary teaching thus :

I. The basic principal of intrinsic purity of heart is first recognized as indispensable.

II. The idea is converted into fact, by practice of purity of: (a) body (b) speech (c) mind (d) and in business.

III. From generalities we come to particulars, in the exercise of : (a) control over the senses ; (b) moderation in food ; (c) mental wakefulness and alertness ; (d) control over sleep.

IV. These are crowned with and summed up in a constant attitude of reflection, a watchfulness in every act, and the tracing of Karmic sequence.

Thus we see that the rules laid down by the Buddha for the guidance of his Bhikshus hold with equal force for our guidance to-day. They are world-wide, and the changing hand of time cannot prevail against them ; the altered circumstances under which we live to-day takes nothing from them in their application to us as guides in modern life when we but recognize that it is our common place faults that must be first cleared away before the path is reached, that "ye suffer from yourselves none else compels" then one by one the fetters will drop off under the magic power of the will, then shall the saying become a truth :

Ye are not bound ! the Soul of things is sweet,  
The Heart of Being is celestial rest ;  
Stronger than woe is will: that which was Good ;  
Doth pass to Better—Best.

## THE CEASING OF SORROW.

**S** AITH a great Scripture, defining pleasure as threefold, that there is a pleasure "born of the blissful knowledge of the Self," that "putteth an end to pain" (Bhagavad Gîtâ, xviii. 36, 37). Pleasures are many, but "the delights that are contact-born, they are verily wombs of pain," whereas he only "whose self is unattached to external contacts . . . enjoys happiness exempt from decay" (v. 21, 22). Looking at the faces we pass daily in city or hamlet, alike in carriage, omnibus and cart, of old, middle-aged and young, of men and women—nay, even of the little ones, too often—we see in all dissatisfaction and harassment, trouble and unrest. Rarely are our eyes gladdened by a face serene and happy, free from lines carven by worry and anxiety, a face that tells of a soul at peace with itself and with all around, of "a heart at leisure," unhurried, strong. Some cause there must be for this general characteristic increasing with the increase of "civilisation," and yet that it is an evitable evil is evidenced by the rare sweet presences that bring with them a serener atmosphere and radiate peace as others radiate unrest. A trouble so general must have its roots deep in human nature, and some fundamental principle, deep-lying as the trouble, must exist as remedy. There must be some mistake into which as a race we fall, that stamps on us this mark of sorrow. But if this be so, ignorance brings about our sadness, and the knowledge of the mistake puts the remedy within our grasp.

Ages ago the knowledge was given in the Upanishads ; somewhat less than five thousand years ago it was expounded in the original Bhagavad Gîtâ ; twenty-four centuries ago the Lord Buddha enforced in plainest language the immemorial teaching ; nineteen hundred years ago the Christ offered the same gift to the western world. Some, learning it, have entered the supreme Peace ; some, earnestly striving to learn it, are feeling its distant touch as an ever-growing reality ; some, seeing its far-off radiance through a momentary rift in the storm-clouds, yearningly aspire to reach it. Alas ! the myriads of driven souls know not of it, dream not of it, and yet it is not far from any one of us. Perhaps a recital of the ancient teaching may help one here and there to escape from sorrow's net, to break the connection with pain.

The cause of sorrow is the thirst for separated life in which individuality begins ; without that thirst the eternal seed could not develop into the likeness of its generating Sire,

becoming a centre of self-consciousness able to exist amid the tremendous vibrations which disintegrate universes, able to remain without a circumference, possessing inherently the power to generate it again, and thus to act as an axis for the eternal motion when it is going to turn the great Wheel which is Parentless, ere the Son has "awakened for the new wheel and his Pilgrimage thereon." Unless the thirst for separated life were aroused, universes could never come into manifestation, and it must continue in each soul until it has accomplished its mighty task—a paradox to the intellect but a truism to the spirit—of forming a centre which is itself eternally, and at the same time is everything.

While this thirst for separated life again draws the soul into the ocean of births and deaths, a yet deeper constituent of its being drives it to seek ever for union. All men seek happiness, seek they never so blindly; the search needs no justification; it is a universal instinct, and ever those who torture the body, and seem to be trampling happiness under foot, do but choose the valley of pain because they believe that through it lies the shortest path to a deeper and more abiding joy.

Now what is the essence of happiness, found alike in the delirious passion of the sensualist and in the rapt ecstasy of the saint? It is union with the object of desire, the becoming one with that which promises delight. The drunkard who swallows his drink, the miser who clutches his gold, the lover who embraces his mistress, the artist who saturates himself in beauty, the thinker who concentrates himself on his idea, the mystic who loses himself in the empyrean, the yogin who merges himself in Deity—all are alike in finding happiness in union with the object of desire. This one thing they have in common. But their place in evolution is shown by the object with which union is sought. Not the search for happiness, but the nature of the object which yields happiness, is the distinguishing mark of the base or lofty soul.

We seem to wander from our thesis in taking our next step, but the wandering is only seeming, illusory. In any given universe one Life is evolving into many lives through an ascending series of form. The lives manifest as energies, displayed and further developed by means of forms. In order that these lives may thus develop, the forms must be continually changing, for each form is first an instrument and later a prison. As the latent powers in a life—inseparable ever from the one Life as a plant from its hidden root—are drawn out



by the play of the environment upon it, the form which was its helpful vehicle becomes its encramping mould. What then can happen? Either the life must perish, stifled by the form it had shaped, or the form must break into pieces and set free the life in an embryonic form of a higher type. But the life cannot perish, being an offshoot of the Eternal; hence the form must break. The breaking of a series of forms round an ever-expanding life means—evolution.

The expansion of this life may be likened to the expansion of life in a seed—from nucleus to embryo, from embryo to seedling, from seedling, to sapling, from sapling to tree, capable of yielding seed like that from which it grew. All growth is the unfolding of hidden powers, powers that in a Logos have reached their highest point for that universe—His universe—and that He plants as seed of every separated life. As water ever rises to its own level so does this down-poured life strive to rise to the level of its source; as mass attracts mass so does each life separate in manifestation seeks itself, the one Life. That one Life exerts ceaselessly an upward drawing force, like the *vis a fronte* of the baffled botanist. Its embryonic Self in each answers to the Father-self and blindly reaches out, groping after the One within the many, the One that is itself. Thus external contacts arise; by the inward urging of the Self the forms meet, then cling or clash. The attractive force is the one Self in all; the variety, the pleasure or the pain, is in the forms.

Further, it is the life that seeks the life, but in the search it is the form that finds the form, thus baffling the seeker. The forms are barriers between life and life, cannot intermingle, are mutually exclusive. Life could mix with life as two rivers mix their waters, but as rivers cannot join while each is running within its own banks, so lives cannot unite while forms lock each within its own enclosure.

Let us gather up our threads and twist them together into an Ariadne-clue to guide us through the Cretan labyrinth of life that we may find and slay the Minotaur called sorrow.

There is a thirst for separated life necessary to the building of the one who endures;

There is a persistent seeking for happiness;

The essence of happiness lies in union with the object of desire;

One Life is evolving through many impermanent forms;

Each separated life seeks this Life which is itself, and thus forms come into contact;

These forms exclude each other and keep the contained lives apart.

We may now understand how sorrow ariseth. A soul seeks beauty, and finds a beautiful form ; it unites itself to the form, rejoices over it ; the form perishes and a void is left. A soul seeks love, and it finds a lovable form ; it unites itself to the form and joys in it ; the form perishes and the heart lies desolate. And this is the experience in its least sorrowful shape ; far more grievous is the sad satiety of possession, the wearied relinquishment of a prize so hardly won. Disillusion treading on the heels of disillusion, and yet ever fresh illusion and ever renewed disgust.

Search the world over and we find that all the sufferings of normal evolution are due to union with the changing and dying forms, the blind and foolish seeking for a happiness that shall endure by a clinging to the form that perishes. These are "the delights that are contact-born," and because they lead to weariness or, at the best, to loss, they are truly described as "wombs of pain." As against these we are bidden to seek "the blissful knowledge of the Self." Let life seek life, and the way to happiness is found ; let the self seek the Self, and the upwinding path to peace stretches before the weary heart. To seek happiness by union with forms is to dwell amid the transitory, the limited, the clashing ; to seek happiness by union with Life is to rest at peace on the permanent, the infinite, the harmonious.

Does this sound as though we were stripping our lives of joy and beauty, and setting them lonely in measureless depths of space ? Nay, what we love in our beloved is not the form but the life, not the body but the soul. Clear-eyed love can leap across death's abyss, across birth's Lethe-stream, and find and clasp its own unerringly though new and alien form be casket for the jewel-soul it knows. When this is seen the cause of sorrow is understood, and long practice brings its certain remedy, for we, ourselves life, not form, unite our life to life, not form, in our dear ones, blend more and more as form after form is dashed in pieces by the compassionate severity of a law that is love, until we find ourselves not twain but one, one also with the Life that is in and around and through all, and, inseparate amid the separated, we have put an end to pain. This is the ceasing of sorrow, this the entering into peace.

On the way to the blissful seat, moreover, the understanding of the cause of sorrow robs sorrow itself of its sting, for we

learn that it is only that stern-seeming because veiled happiness "which at first is as venom but in the end is as nectar." From this knowledge springs a strong serenity that can endure as seeing the end, can "glorify the Lord in the fires." Shall not the gold rejoice in the burning that frees it from worthless dross ?

Without the experience of sorrow, strength could not be developed. Strong mental and moral muscles are not obtained without strenuous exercise, any more than physical muscles become powerful without. Struggle is a condition of the lower evolutions in nature; it is the means by which strength is developed. Only perfect strength is calm.

Without the experience of sorrow, sympathy could not be evolved. By suffering we learn to understand at once the pain and its needs, the demand and its meeting. Having suffered under temptation, we learn how to help effectively those who are tempted; only those who have risen from falls can aid the fallen with that exquisite understanding which alone prevents help from being insult. Every bud of pain opens into a blossom of power, and who would grudge the brief travail through which an eternal Saviour is brought forth ?

Without the experience of sorrow, we could not gain the knowledge of good and evil; without this the conscious choice of the highest could not become certain, nor the very root of desire to unite with forms be eradicated. The perfect man is not one whose lower nature still yearns for contact-born delights, but is strongly held in check; he is one who has eliminated from his lower nature all its own tendencies, and has brought it into perfect harmonious union (yoga) with himself; who passes through the lower worlds unaffected by any of their attractions or repulsions, his will unalterably pointing towards the highest, working without an effort with all the inviolability of law and all the flexibility of intelligent adaptation. For the building of such a man hundreds of incarnations are not too many, myriad years are not too long.

Never let us forget, in the wildest storm of sorrow, that these early stages of our evolution, in which pain plays so large a part, are early stages only. They bear an infinitesimal proportion to our existence ; nay, the two things are incom-measurables, for how can we measure time against eternity, myriad years against an unending life ? If we spake of the cycle of reincarnation as the infant stage of humanity, full of infantile ailments, we should utterly exaggerate its relative importance. Verily "our light affliction, which is but for a

moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Therefore when the storm-clouds gather, look beyond them to the changeless sky ; when the billows buffet, lift the eyes to the eternal shore. Let earth and hell pour forth their angriest forces to overwhelm, they shall only lift us upwards, bear us outwards. For we are unborn, undying, constant, changeless and eternal, and we are here only to forge the instruments for an immortal service, the service which is perfect freedom.

ANNIE BESANT.

—*The Theosophical Review.*

### EVOLUTION AND REINCARNATION.

( *Continued from page 135.* )

**B**UT grant that the consciousnesses of the several changes occurring within a given organism, could, somehow, by some unthinkable means, synthesize themselves, thus co-ordinating the experiences of its existence from birth to death, what becomes of this co-ordination when the organism is disintegrated? Suppose that the consciousnesses produced by the changes which had occurred during the lifetime of a crystal had succeeded in getting themselves well co-ordinated, how could this co-ordination of experiences be added to the sum of evolution at the death of the crystal? By no conceivable means. As the crystal disintegrated all record and recollection of its experiences would be blotted out, and the molecules which composed it would be left at the same stage of evolution which they had reached when they first became part of the crystal. They might enter other crystals at the same stage of development as the one which they had left, and again be disintegrated. Similar cycles of integration and disintegration might be repeated for an eternity but the mind can conceive of no development of consciousness, no evolution. But it is admitted on all hands that evolution is a fact ; and, perhaps every one will agree with Spencer's recognition of the fact that it is the consciousness which evolves. If these two facts are conceded, then it follows that consciousness cannot be the result but the cause of any phenomena represented by the term change. For it has been shown (1) that results of changes could not consolidate themselves, without which there could be no co-ordination of experiences, hence no evolution ; and (2) were it granted that the changes occurring from birth to death in a given organism

could get themselves co-ordinated, then we are met with the further impossibility of conceiving how this co-ordination of experiences could be added to the sum of evolution at the death of the organism, for that co-ordination having begun with the integration of the organism it must end with the disintegration of the organism. The first difficulty cannot be met without supplying a medium capable of cognizing and co-ordinating the changes occurring in the organism. The existence of consciousness, or soul, apart from change, is an intellectual necessity to account for the phenomena of evolution, quite as much as the existence of ether is an intellectual necessity to account for light and other phenomena. If the existence of consciousness, or soul, be granted the second difficulty also will be overcome. For if its existence is once conceded, neither its beginning nor its ending can be conceived. It must have existed before the integration of the organism and it must persist after the organism has disintegrated. It must in fact be the essence of the organism, the power which produced it. How the experiences of any organism can be added to the sum of evolution is then easily conceivable. When the consciousness has gained all the experience it can get in one organism it leaves it and builds for itself a new form.

The experience which it gathers through the building, operating, and life-time environment of one form makes it wiser and abler to build a higher organism. Thus the gradual perfection of type goes on; slowly, imperceptibly; but still there is progress. As Plato puts it, "The soul weaves ever her garments anew." Without this idea of reincarnation evolution is positively unthinkable. Everyone who has looked within himself knows that his consciousness is not any one of the experiences of his life nor the sum of all of them but is something independent of and apart from all experience. It is his very being which has neither beginning nor ending, but is.

To follow the progress of the consciousness, step by step, from mineral to man, there must be a continuous and unbroken chain. If there is anywhere a single break, the two ends could not be united by any process that can be represented in thought.

If the development and persistence of the consciousness is once admitted then the degrees of development must extend almost to infinity in both directions. Though the mind can trace it back till the degrees of consciousness become almost infinitely small, yet it cannot trace it back till it becomes

no consciousness at all. Between the smallest conceivable degree of consciousness and no consciousness at all there is an infinite gulf. On the other hand there must be degrees of consciousness above the human which have almost reached the absolute, for they must have been progressing throughout the eternities of duration. That there are States of Consciousness far beyond the normal human there can hardly be any doubt. Here we have *a priori* proof of their existence ; and in such books as "The Secret Doctrine," "The Growth of the Soul," etc., we actually hear from them. Those who have advanced but one stage beyond normal mankind know from actual observation that reincarnation is a fact. Man has reached that stage of evolution where he can and must take hold of his own development if he is to progress at all. Up to a certain point he can advance himself as fast or slow as he wills. This power of self-development is reached when he becomes self-conscious, that is, when he can turn his reason upon his inner consciousness and cogitate upon the purposes of his own being—a process which Spencer has proved to be a logical impossibility. He says : First Principles, § 20, "The mental act in which self is known, implies, like every other mental act, a perceiving subject and a perceived object. If then the object perceived is self, what is the subject that perceives ? Or, if it is the true self which thinks, what other self can it be that is thought of ? Clearly, a true cognition of self implies a state in which the knowing and known are one—in which subject and object are identified ; and this Mr. Mansel rightly holds to be the annihilation of both." This indirectly proves the occult position which declares that man is not only one centre of consciousness, but several.

In the mineral kingdom, when the crystal dies, its consciousness persists in an astral form-body which again seeks to express itself physically. The Astral form is the prototype of the crystal, and it draws into itself the physical molecules, which, as it were, make the form-body objective. But each of these molecules is built upon a principle similar to the crystal itself. Each of these has a consciousness and astral form of its own. These are co-ordinated or synthesized by the higher consciousness of the crystal, and thus co-ordinated they form the life of the crystal. This applies to all living forms whatsoever, from atoms to planets. When the higher consciousness of the organism ceases to co-ordinate the centres of consciousness in the molecules, it is said to be dead. WM. SCOTT.

## MRS. BESANT AT THE VEGETARIAN JUBILEE.

THE Jubilee Meeting of the Vegetarian Society—the 50th Annual Meeting—was held at Manchester on October 15th. It was one of the most successful that had ever been held in connection with the Society.

Mrs. Besant presided over the public meeting in the evening and in her opening address said it was her pleasing duty to open that meeting in celebration of the 50th anniversary, the Jubilee of the Vegetarian Society, and she hoped that before they left that hall some new members would be added to their ranks. It seemed to her that she owed her position there more to good fortune than to merit, for when she heard telegrams read from vegetarians of 35 years' standing, she felt that, being only a child of not quite nine years, she was scarcely in her proper place in taking the chair. Nevertheless, being there, she would voice their general congratulations that vegetarianism had passed beyond the point when it was simply an object of ridicule to the general public. They did not now find the vegetarian described as a creature who lived merely on cabbage and potatoes. It was understood that within the vegetable kingdom they could find sufficient for human nutriment, without going outside it and infringing on the lives of sentient creatures around them. That seemed as though it might be their first congratulation, when they thought of the age of the movement. It had outlived the period of ridicule, it was entering on a period of successful propaganda, and of respectful recognition among all thoughtful and intelligent people. Looking now for a moment at the causes which might lead people to adopt vegetarianism as a rule of life, there were many aspects in which the principle might be presented to the public. She had no doubt that those who would follow her, trained by so many years of successful teaching of vegetarianism, would take up one by one many of the most important and salient points. For herself she would confine her remarks to a review of those principles which dealt with it from the general stand point of the law of life, which, spoken in other words, was the law of love. They might take up vegetarianism to purify the body; they might take it up in order that they might have a body that would be less an obstacle to intellectual and moral growth; and such reasons as those justified the practice, and no man or woman need be ashamed to confess them. But still deeper and more attractive than such an object was their



principle as vegetarians, the recognition of the unity of life in all that was around them, that life was everywhere, through all, and in everything, and that they were but parts of that one universal life. When they recognised that unity with all living things—and from her standpoint all things were living—then at once arose the question of a life that must needs be nourished and supported. How could they support that life of their's with least injury to the lives around them; how could they prevent their own life adding to the suffering of the world in which they lived? Then, looking at all living things, they found that they could distinguish between one kind of living thing and another. Vegetables most certainly lived; she was not excluding them from the all-embracing circle of life; but though they lived they had not as yet developed within themselves those feelings of pleasure and of pain, those sensations keen and acute, which belonged not to the mineral and vegetable lives, but to the animal and the human kingdoms. They found among animal, as amongst men, power of feeling pleasure, power of feeling pain; they saw them moved by love and by hate; they saw them feeling terror and attraction; they recognised in them powers of sensation closely akin to their own, and while they transcended them immensely in intellect, in mere passional characteristics, their natures, and the animals' were closely allied. They knew that when they felt terror, terror meant suffering to themselves. They knew that when a wound was inflicted, that wound meant pain to themselves. They knew that threats brought to them suffering; they had a feeling of shrinking, of fear, of absence of friendly relations; and at once they began to see that in their relations to the animal kingdom a duty arose which all thoughtful and compassionate minds should recognise, the duty that because they were stronger in mind than the animals they were their guardians and helpers, not their tyrants and oppressors, and that they had no right to cause them suffering and terror merely for the gratification of the palate, merely for an added luxury to their own lives. For man, in that universe of unbroken lives, had his place and duty. All who were weaker, all who were in his charge, all whom he was able to influence came, or should come, within the circle of his love. Those creatures that were around them, and that helped them in their lives, whose strength was yielded to their service, whose gratitude repaid their kindness, those creatures they felt were knit to them by ties that humanity forbade them to disregard; and they declared that they could not



permit the causeless torture of those creatures by the ignorant and the thoughtless. But how could they talk about the prevention of cruelty to animals, and punish the carter, the ploughman, the ignorant amongst them, if they set them the example of the worse cruelty of the cattle-truck and the slaughter-house, and taught them that they had no ties of brotherhood with the creatures that they slew for the maintenance of their own life? Thus looking upon the animal kingdom, a sense of duty awakened within them; they felt that animals were not intended simply to be slaves of men's whims, to be victims of his fancies and desires; they were living creatures, showing forth a Divine life, in lesser measure than themselves, it might be, but it was the same Divine life that was the heart of their heart and the soul of their soul. If that was so, if in their measure also they showed out the love that was Divine, should men check that manifestation, should they retard that evolution by letting them meet from their superiors cruelty and death, instead of training, education and aid in their evolutionary growth? For the animals evolved under the fostering intelligence of man, the horse, the bullock, the dog, the elephant, any of the creatures that were around them in different lands, all developed a growing intelligence as they came into healthful relations with their elder brethren, men and women. Man found that they answered with love to his love, with growing intelligence to the exercise of man's minds; and they began to realise that it was their duty to train and help that growth by making them co-workers with themselves, by developing their intelligence, by human companionship, and not by slaughtering them and making a gulf of blood between them and mankind. For, surely, man should not go through Nature leaving behind him a track of destruction, of misery, of hideous injury wherever he went. They who ought to be the beautifiers of the world, made it less beautiful than Nature had left it. Wherever they went, terror trod in their footsteps; wherever man travelled, fear continually stalked behind him. Man went into some island where hitherto human foot had not trodden; around the strange creature man, wild animals would gather, birds would come around him, curious, desiring to investigate the new form of living creature; and sailors would tell them that sometimes when they had landed for the first time on an island uninhabited by man, those creatures had crowded around them in trustful ignorance, coming close beside them to receive—what? to be struck down in every direction, clubbed with dreadful

weapons, their skins and feathers torn from off them, and left often uselessly slaughtered, bleeding witnesses of the cruelty of man. And as that occurred time after time, all through the animal kingdom the feeling of fear arose, so that when they walked through the wood or over the field, all the fair creatures of the woodland fled from their approach as soon as they heard their step; and it was only now and again in the history of mankind that some noble soul was born to humanity, some saint of compassion and of love unbounded, like St. Francis of Assisi, it was only then that they saw what man should be to the brute, what man might be to his younger brothers, as even the very birds, wild to others, would fly to him and settle on his shoulder, recognising the outpouring love that was within him, and trusting him as all innocent creatures trust one another. So that one standpoint they might take up, it seemed to her, was that standpoint of love, of recognition of their place in the world; not that they themselves might be cleaner in the materials of their bodies, not that they themselves might have better instruments for their minds and for their souls, but that they might be better channels of Divine love to the world on every side. For that reason fundamentally she was a vegetarian, and would not take for herself the life of any sentient creature that lived around her. There was one other thought closely allied to that. What of their duties to their fellow men? And here she appealed particularly to her own sex, because women were supposed to be the standard in the community of refinement, of gentleness, of compassion, of tenderness, of purity. But no one could eat the flesh of a slaughtered animal without having used the hand of a man as slaughterer. Suppose that they had to kill for themselves the creatures whose bodies they would fain have upon their table, was there one woman in a hundred who would go to the slaughter-house to slay the bullock, the calf, the sheep, or the pig? Nay, was there one in a hundred who would not shrink from going to see it done, one in a hundred who would not be horrified to stand ankle deep in blood and see the carcasses lying there just after the animals were slain? But if they could not do it, nor see it done, if they were so refined that they could not allow close contact with themselves to the butchers who furnished them with their food, if they felt that these were so coarsened by their trade that their very bodies were made coarse by the constant contact of the blood with which they must be continually imbrued, if they recognised

the physical coarseness which resulted inevitably from the contact, dared they call themselves refined when they purchased their refinement by the brutalisation of others and demanded that some should be brutal in order that they might eat the results of their brutality? They were not free from the brutalising results of that trade simply because they took no direct part in it. Lately she had been in the city of Chicago—one of the great slaughter-houses of the world,—where the slaughter-men, who were employed from early morn to late at night in the killing of thousands of these hapless creatures, made a class practically apart from their fellow man; they were marked out by the police as the most dangerous part of the community; amongst them were most crimes of violence, most ready use of the knife. One day she was speaking to an authority on that subject, and she asked him how it was that he knew so decidedly that most of the murders and the crimes with the knife were perpetrated by that particular class of men, and his answer was suggestive although horrible; he said: “There is a peculiar turn of the knife which men learn to use in the slaughter-house, for as the living creatures are brought to them by machinery, these men slit their throats as they pass by. That twist of the wrist is the characteristic of most crimes with the knife committed amongst our Chicago population.” That struck her at once as both a horrible and significant fact. What right had people to condemn other men to a trade that made them so readily take to the knife in anger, which marked them out as specially brutalised—brutes amongst their fellow men? Being constantly in the sight and the smell of blood, their whole nature was coarsened; accustomed to kill thousands of creatures, they lost all sense of reverence for sentient life, they grew indifferent to the suffering they continually saw around them; accustomed to inflict pain they grew callous to the sight of pain; accustomed to kill swiftly, and sometimes not even waiting till the creature was dead before the skin was stripped from it, their nerves became coarsened, hardened and brutalised, and they were less men, as men, because they were slaughterers of brutes. And every one who ate flesh meat had part in that brutalisation, every one who used what they provided was guilty of that degradation of his fellow men. If she might not appeal to them in the name of the animal, if under mistaken views they regarded the animal as not sharing their life, then she appealed to them in the name of human brotherhood, their duty to

their fellow men, their duty to their nation, which must be built up partly of the children of those who slaughtered, who physically inherited the very signs of their brutalising occupation; she appealed to them by their duty as men and women who should raise the race, not degrade it; who should try to make it divine, not try to make it brutal, try to make it pure, not try to make it foul; and therefore, in the name of human brotherhood, she appealed to them to leave their own tables free from the stain of blood, and their consciences free from the degradation of their fellow-men.

After numerous addresses from other speakers the Rev. J. Clark, in proposing a hearty vote of thanks to Mrs. Besant said, her presence there as president was due to some discussion which took place at a meeting of the executive regarding their attitude to people of various religious views, and whether they had that breadth among them that would include vegetarians of every type of thought and religious faith. It was said emphatically by those present that they could rise to this altitude, and when they were immediately challenged to invite Mrs. Annie Besant to preside over the annual meeting, they said "Aye" with one accord. He was sure the audience would not blame them for affording an opportunity of witnessing how eloquently she had pleaded on behalf of the cause in which her heart was interested, with all his heart he moved their most cordial thanks to Mrs. Besant for her kindness and efficiency, and he would ask the chairman of the executive to second it. Mrs. Besant in replying to the enthuſiastic adoption of the vote of thanks said "Friends, our meeting is ended; the fifty years lying behind us is closed; fifty years are opening before us when the Society will be celebrating its centennial anniversary. None of us on the platform to night can expect to speak on that occasion, half a century a head. There are some here young enough to take our places when those fifty years lie behind them, as now fifty years are closed; and I appeal to the young, as our last words to night, take up this banner, carry it through the years that lie in front, and be able to say fifty years hence—not to a meeting within walls, the meeting then will be too vast for a hall like this—be able then to say that from to-night, when they heard the speeches at the Jubilee Meeting, they started on a purer life, and that they reckoned from the Jubilee Meeting at Manchester their obedience to that Divine Command—"Thou shalt not kill".

## THE THEOSOPHICAL CONVENTION OF 1897.

THE twenty-second annual Convention of the Theosophical Society was held at Adyar Madras from 27-30th December, 1897. As usual delegates from all parts of India including Ceylon had assembled to celebrate this one of the most important of our conventions.

The chair was taken, as usual, by the President-Founder, at noon on the 27th December. Owing to the prevalence of the bubonic plague in the Bombay Presidency, Dr. Arthur Richardson Ph. D., F. C. S., F. T. S., was the only representative of our several active Branches within the infected territory. Mr. A. G. Watson, F. T. S., came from his engineering work in the Kotah native State; Rai Sahib Ishwari Prasad, F. T. S., from Amraoti; Mrs. Beatty, F. T. S., from Wellington, Nilgiris; Mrs. Higgins, Miss Rodda, Miss Gmeiner and Mr. Peter D'Abrew—all of the Hope Lodge T. S., came from Colombo; Mr. M. M. Desai, from the Central Provinces; and H. R. H. Prince Prisdan Choomsai of Siam, now a Buddhist monk known as Jinawara Vansa, and another Buddhist monk of the Amarapoora sect of Ceylon, came from that lovely Island on a visit to the President-Founder. Babu Upendranath Basu, M. A., Joint General Secretary of the Indian Section, came from Benares to supervise the business of this year's Convention of the Section. A feeling of buoyancy and perfect confidence in the future of the Society seemed to prevail, and the proceedings went off without the smallest jar or friction. The Convention Hall looked very fine and spacious since the four heavy brick and stucco columns in the vestibule were replaced by iron girders and the whole floor space opened out. Other radical improvements of the same sort are to be made during the coming year, so that by next Convention the Hall would be so changed for the better that Mrs. Besant would scarcely be able to recognize it.

The feature of the Convention was the conspicuous absence of our beloved sister Mrs. Annie Besant and the filling up of her place by Miss Lilian Edger, General Secretary of the New Zealand Section, who more than fulfilled the expectations formed of her by her able and highly instructive lectures on the morning of the four days of the Convention. The subjects selected by her were "Theosophy Applied (1) to Religion, (2) to Home, (3) to Society and (4) to State." The learned reporter of the *Hindu* has in his brilliant notices of these lectures praised them as among the best ever delivered in Madras. We cite below brief extracts from these able reports:—

"MISS EDGER and the great Society under the auspices of which she made her first appearance this morning must certainly be congratulated on the excellent impression she has produced on the audience gathered together from all parts of the country . . . . We can have no hesitation in declaring that her first Indian discourse on religion and theosophy was a most eloquent and convincing one, and that she maintained throughout the time she spoke, a perfect mastery over her audience and displayed both careful discrimination in the choice of her topics and of the arguments for enforcing them, as well as powers of clear presentation. Her language was choice, and her delivery calm ; . . . . The subject taken up for discussion by Miss Edger was the mission of Theosophy in laying bare to each great religious fraternity of the world the essential and underlying, but neglected, though *common*, principles and ideas of their faith. The elevating and harmonising influence of a lecture like this, enforced with all the graces and melodies of the gentle and calm music of Miss Edger's attractive personality has been of a highly impressive character and not to be easily forgotten. While listening attentively to Miss Edger's clear and convincing eloquence her delighted audience must have felt not a little surprised at the inspiration which a knowledge of other faiths, broader and more human than that in which she was born and bred, has been able to convey to her, and the marvellous influence for good which is being exercised on the remotest corners of the world by the theosophical medium through which that knowledge has been conveyed in a manner so well calculated to raise and enrich humanity.

"If we say of Miss Edger's second lecture that she more than justified the expectations she raised by her first one yesterday, and that she has gained another distinct step in the estimation of her worth as a teacher by her audience, it will be only feebly voicing the chorus of approval and praise that was welling up from the lips and hearts of all. It was freely given out by many elderly members of the audience, and by some especially who are connected with the profession of teaching the youth of the land, that the *very practical* method of dealing with her subjects which is so characteristic of Miss Edger's lectures is a positive merit of so high a character and so much needed under our existing circumstances that our love and gratitude and appreciation of her is all the more warm and genuine to-day.

"It only remains for us to reiterate our conviction that this

particular course of (four) lectures has been of a really elevating and inspiring character to our countrymen in Madras. May the blessing of Sri Krishna and the sages of India and the world rest on Miss Edger's noble mission to the men and women of Bhâratavarsha, prosper her endeavours for the spiritual elevation and emancipation of mankind, and crown those endeavours with the happiness springing from the consciousness of success and fruition."

The President-Founder in his opening address in heartily welcoming the brothers assembled, observed that never before since the foundation of the Society, had its prospect been brighter, its sky more unclouded. He said that storms might come again—nay that they might be sure that they would—that fresh obstacles would present themselves, but that one such exciting exhilarating year as 1897 braced up one's courage to stand the worst shocks and surmount the most obstructive difficulties that could be found in their forward path. He further observed that it was not merely from one quarter that good fortune was flowing towards this centre, but from all sides; not only from America but from Europe, India and the Australasian Colonies came to them the proofs that their Theosophical movement rides on the crest of a wave of spiritual influx that was circulating around the globe. He added that it was true that he spoke with enthusiasm but not with exaggeration, and that time would prove the correctness of his views.

In Ceylon the Society's schools and Colleges were in a very encouraging condition. There are now under its supervision 105 schools, with some 17,000 children in attendance. Some fifty more schools have been opened by Buddhists. The 33rd edition of our President's *Buddhist catechism* was published during the year.

During his Australian tour the President visited all our branches in the colonies and made personal acquaintance with all our members there. The President declared that in those young communities he found here and there individuals who were as ardent in zeal for Theosophy and as eager for instruction in the hoary wisdom of the Aryan Sages, as he had found in India itself. He complained of a tendency in certain very few Branches there to assert their corporate importance and autonomy instead of setting example of perfect loyalty to the principle of federal combination of autonomous units for the common good. He considered our Society as a model of a *maximum* of centralized moral strength with a *minimum* of



invasion of local independence as the world could ever show. Each Section of the Society was but an organized Central Committee which acted for all its Branches, derived its power from them, and served as their agency to keep alive the bond between them and the President-Founder, the Society's central executive. He hoped that this view might become clear to every Branch throughout the world, that it might realize that it was but one out of four hundred similar groups of students and that no one Section was of any more importance to him than any other, but was equally important as any other in the whole Society.

The President called attention of all Theosophists to the splendid example of self-denial set by the Salvation Army during their Self-denial week, a result of which he saw in New Zealand where in one week's time Rs. 25,000 were contributed to their general treasury. He solemnly adjured all Theosophists to begin this year in a similar way to set aside some fixed percentage of their respective incomes as a great fund for the general benefit of the Society, for distribution as the exigencies of its work in the various sections and otherwise throughout the world should demand. He recommended that the White Lotus Day week might be selected for that purpose.

In America the labours of Mrs. Besant and Countess Wachtmeister have raised out of the wreck of our Section there 53 Branches from 13 only which had remained loyal to our Society. Theosophy has been redeemed there from much disrepute and contempt into which it had fallen owing to the unwise actions of the Judge party, by the magnificent expositions of it by Mrs. Besant whose tour was apparently enjoined by the Higher Powers and supervised and piloted with consummate wisdom and care. Hence it was that in spite of every possible obstacle which human malignity could devise, she succeeded beyond all expectations in her appointed task. One of the members there contributed towards the propaganda work the cost of printing 50,000 copies of Mrs. Besant's pamphlet on "What is Theosophy?"

The reports of the other Sections of the Society throughout the world—the Indian, the European, Scandinavian, Netherlands, Australian and New Zealand—give very good and encouraging news and everything goes on as we desire. The number of Sections of the Society throughout the world stood at 7 and the number of Branches at 492 in 1897.

The T. Subba Row Gold Medal which was instituted by the



convention of 1883 for award to the best writer on Theosophical subject during each year, has been awarded to Mr. C. W. Leadbeater for his valuable contributions during the year under report. Rai Saheb Ishwara Prasad, F. T. S., has contributed a sum of Rs. 500 towards this object which along with certain other contributions has raised its capital bearing fund to Rs. 1,500.

As usual, the Anniversary of the Society was publicly celebrated on the 28th December, at Victoria Public Hall, Madras. The building was thronged to its full capacity, over 2,000 persons being present, and great enthusiasm prevailed. The addresses this year were by the President-Founder; Dr. Arthur Richardson, Ph. D.; H. R. H. the Prince-priest of Siam (by written paper, read for him by the President-Founder); Babu Roshan Lal, Barrister-at-Law. Allahabad; Mr. Harry Banbery, F. T. S.; Mr. A. F. Knudsen, F. T. S., of Hawaiian Islands; and Miss Lilian Edger, M.A. The President called attention to the fact that at the fifteen annual functions like the present, which had been held in Madras, he had placed before them speakers from England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, the United States, Japan, Ceylon, Russia, France and Tibet; he now added to this list, which so strikingly proves the world-wide spread of Theosophical ideas, friends from New Zealand, Siam and the Sandwich Islands. Dr. Richardson gave a most interesting account of his observations on the Plague at Bombay; the paper of the Prince of Siam expressed his views upon Practical Theosophy; and Miss Edger closed with a brief but heart-touching address which was applauded to the echo.

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## Notes and News.

FROM information received about the recent Convention of our Society at Adyar it appears that it was one of the best gatherings which has been ever piloted by our noble President-Founder. Miss Lilian Edger has entirely justified all the expectations formed of her. She has left Adyar in company with the Colonel for Calcutta whence she is expected to commence her Indian tour, and we hope to see her on this side of India in a few months time. We cordially wish her every success in her noble and unselfish work. An account of the Convention will be found among these pages.

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THE parent-nest of our Society in London has sent us a fine Christmas present in the person of one of her younger brood—Mr. Harry Banbery, President, Bow Lodge, East End, London—to carry on the work of our cause in Ceylon under the direction of the President-Founder. Mr. Banbery arrived in Bombay on the 26th December last and put up at our Lodge for the day and left the same evening by the mail train for Madras. He was accorded a hearty welcome by our brothers here. A public reception was given to him in the Lodge in the evening and our President, Bro. David Gostling, introduced him to the audience in a few well-chosen words; and Bro. Banbery was duly garlanded in the oriental fashion much to his delight and amusement among hearty plaudits of brothers and friends assembled. Bro. Banbery in reply offered his cordial thanks for the reception given and the kindness shown him during his brief stay in our Lodge. He gave a highly interesting account of the work done at home and expressed a desire that he would be one day working among us.

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WE are glad to announce that an anonymous donor has quietly put into our Lodge Subscription Box for the free distribution of pamphlets the handsome sum of Rs. 500 (five hundred) with an intimation that it should be used as a nucleus for a building fund for our Lodge and if not to use it towards its general fund. To this amount a further equal sum has been contributed by the noble President of our Lodge, Bro: David Gostling, for the same purpose, thus raising the nucleus of our building fund to Rs. 1,000. Blessed is the hand that giveth!

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*Light*—the eminent Spiritualistic journal of London—bestows the following high encomium on Mrs. Besant's Adyar lectures on "Four Great Religions":—

"The fact is that in matters of religion Mrs. Besant may be said to be a kind of free-lover, and as La Rochefoucault said of woman's love, so may we say of Mrs. Besant's religion—that in her first religion Mrs. Besant loved her own particular Creed, but in her subsequent faiths what she loved has been Religion itself. The religion she loves best is that with which, as it were, she happens to be consorting at the moment. Not that she is fickle or heartless, but rather that she has got so much above the foolish prejudice of thinking that any particular religion is the happy possessor of all the truth, that she is able to see in every religion a partial embodiment of her ideal religion, so that she is able to love them all in turn with perfect impartiality. When one reads what she says about Hinduism, one concludes that she is a worshipper of Vishnu, and pictures her as bathing religiously in the Holy Ganges; when she dilates on Buddhism, one cannot help thinking that she certainly must be a Buddhist, and imagines her burning joss-sticks before the shrine of her Lord; when one listens to her glowing eulogy of Zoroastrianism, it strikes one forcibly that she is in reality a Zoroastrian; and when one comes to her exposition of Christianity, one is inclined to exclaim, 'Bless me! if she is not a Christian after all'!"

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*Theosophy* (formerly *The Path*) the organ of Mr. Judge's Society in America has with its November number again changed its name and appears under the title of "Universal Brotherhood." Dr. J. D. Buck contributes an excellent article on the "Secret of Power."

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WE rejoice to see from the *Brahmavâdin* that Swâmi Vivekânanda has been urging on the people of Lahore and Sialkote the need of practical work. The starving millions, he urged cannot live on metaphysical speculation, they require bread; and in a lecture he gave at Lahore on Bhakti, he suggested as the best religion for to-day that every man should according to his means go out into the street and search for hungry Nârâyans, take them into their houses, feed them and clothe them. The giver should give to man remembering that he is the highest temple of God. He had seen charity

in many countries and the reason of its failure was the spirit in which it was carried out. "Here take this and go away." Charity belied its name so long as it was given to gain reputation or applause of the world.

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WE have good news all round as regards the progress of Theosophy in all lands. One of our German brothers says that Germany is preparing itself for Theosophy. In France M. Gillard reports the prospects as most favourable. Theosophy has made definite progress in Spain during last year, the press there which hitherto followed the policy of silence, is now eagerly borrowing and spreading theosophical ideas, though without acknowledgment. The Rome Lodge in Italy meets every day for study and a new Italian theosophical paper first named *Parva Favella* (the little spark) and subsequently *Teosofia* has been started. In America, Australia, and New Zealand Theosophy is fast spreading far and wide. On the whole the prospects are most cheering and encouraging.

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THE Surat Branch of our Society has recently published in Gujarati at the cost of their H. P. B. Propaganda Fund an excellent compendium of *The Secret Doctrine*. The book makes a goodly volume and is entitled "Gupta Gnyan Samhita" and is divided into six chapters consisting of (1) Introduction (2) Cosmogogenesis (3) Anthropogenesis, (4) Stanzas of Dzryan with Commentaries, (5) Pauranic Mythology and its interpretation and (6) the concluding chapter is devoted to an excellent translation of that Crest-Jewel of Theosophy "Light on the Path" with admirable comments below each aphorism. The book is written in easy and simple Gujarati and we strongly recommend it to Gujarati reading public.

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During January 1898 the following lectures were delivered in our Lodge :—In English—"Is suffering a necessity for spiritual culture," by Bro : D. D. Jassavala ; "God—His existence, worship and attributes by the help of Phrenology" by Bro : B. A. Sahasrabudhe ; "Meditation" by Bro : P. S. Daru ; "The Qualifications of a Theosophist" by Bro : P. M. Ghadiali. In Gujarati—"Aura and the Plague" by Bro : Panachand A. Parakh ; "The Three Paths to Union with God," three lectures by Bro : Manmohandas D. Shroff.